

## FAMILY

# Making Reading Social for Your Kids at New Book Hangouts

NewsUSA

(NU) - With so many TV shows, videos, and games vying for a child's attention, it can be hard to keep him or her inspired to read. It can be even harder to do so in "real life" settings, but interacting with other kids and sharing excitement for a series or character is often more powerful than swiping a screen.

Enter the Barnes & Noble Kids' Book Hangout. This new nationwide program invites kids aged 6 through 12 to go to their local Barnes & Noble to hang out, talk books, and play fun games and activities - all "in real life."

Through this new program, Barnes & Noble booksellers will lead kids in games and activities related to select titles that showcase a range of genres and tastes.

"The whole idea of the Hangout is for kids to see how much fun reading can be, and that enjoying characters, stories, and books really can be a social experience," says Stephanie Fryling, Vice President of Merchandising, Children's Books. "If the kids walk away with a new favorite character or series that motivates them to keep reading, then we'll have done our job."

The first Kids' Book Hangout starts Saturday, July 28, at 2 p.m. in every Barnes & Noble store nationwide. Kids don't have to read the featured books, and everyone from 6-12 is welcome. The national bookseller will continue to host Hangouts on a seasonal schedule.

For the inaugural gathering, Barnes & Noble has teamed up with Penguin Young Readers to showcase titles that include heart-felt poetry, a hilarious Caveboy, a mysterious adventure, and a Beattle-crazed young woman. The



books are:

- *Brown Girl Dreaming*, by Jacqueline Woodson
- *More Scrawny Than Brawny*, by Aaron Reynolds
- *The Basque Dragon*, by Adam Gidwitz
- *She Loves You (Yeah, Yeah, Yeah)*, by Ann Hood

The four titles will be 20 percent off all day at Barnes & Noble on July 28, and Frappuccinos and smoothies will be \$1 off for Hangout participants.

The first Hangout comes at a great time for parents struggling to keep their kids reading during the summer. When school starts up again, the Hangouts will be a good reminder that books aren't just for classrooms.

"The relationship people have with books and reading often starts in childhood, and we hope these Hangouts will help parents and caregivers lay a great foundation for young readers," Fryling says.

The program adds to Barnes & Noble's other offerings for kids, including the earn-a-free-book Summer Reading Program, and weekly Storytimes for younger kids.

The bookseller has more information on its website: [www.bn.com/bnhangout](http://www.bn.com/bnhangout), and will be posting about the event at #BNHangout.